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EUR/NCE FOR FICHTE, PM FOR DOWLEY, OSD FOR SADOWSKA

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SUBJECT: CZECH PARLIAMENT APPROVES MILITARY DEPLOYMENTS FOR 2007

REF: PRAGUE 1466

¶1. On November 5th the Czech Chamber of Deputies approved a bill authorizing proposed foreign military deployments for 2007 (Note: Reftel provided full details of the plan. End note). The legislation now goes to the President for signature.

¶2. The bill approved by the lower chamber, and previous by the Senate, is unchanged from the government's draft proposal. Troop limits are authorized for 2007 as follows:

-- Iraq: 100  
-- Afghanistan: 225  
-- Balkans: 730 (to be divided between KFOR and ALTHEA)  
-- Lebanon: 10  
-- NATO Response Force: up to 400 troops in the period January 15 - June 15, 2007, and up to 35 troops in the period June 15 - January, 2008.

¶3. The new, ten-member UNIFIL deployment was the only proposal to receive unanimous backing in the lower chamber. The Communist party voted against each of the other deployments. However, each did receive full support from the mainstream parties on left and right.

¶4. Comment: Further ad-hoc deployment bills will be possible in 2007 if the Czech Government decides to deploy additional personnel. Ministry of Defense sources confirm that Czech authorities are considering deploying medical personnel to Afghanistan in 2007 over and above the troop levels just authorized by Parliament. Post is seeking further information about this development. End comment.

GRABER